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MOTLEY

BY

C. F. HUSTON MILLER

BOSTON
RICHARD G. BADGER
THE GORHAM PRESS

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To

THE AUTHOR OF "A SCENT OF EASTERN SANDAL WOOD" AND "IN AUTOMOBILE ALONG THE ITALIAN BATTLE FRONT"

My Mother

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MOTLEY

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TO THE PRUSSIAN, SUPERMAN

Ye who have dragged the Beauty of the world
through the hellish foulness of your minds,
Who have tarnished the lustre which a man was
wont to call his soul's,
Have besmirched the honour of the written word,
tottered the soaring arch and shivered the
sunset of the stained pane,
Have gashed, torn and sullied the living flesh of
God;

Know, that though your hideous triumphs have
resounded through your reeking streets,
And though, Superman—*Sub*-beast that is, your
Prussian minds have revelled in the blood of
half a world,
The true Soul of that world still lives!
And though, to-day, your dripping hands may
point with pride toward your ghastly handi-
work of hell
And your twisted lips may spit upon the Flower
of a World's great sacrifice;

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For every lover of the Beautiful, the Good, with face ground into grimace by your heel of hate
There stands in rear another, nay, more than one, who loving all that ye, yourselves, abhor
Will fill the ranks and wage this fight for those whom you have done to death,
For Beauty, Truth, the Right—ay, *all* that ye, sub-bestial as ye are,
Deem contemptible, and weak.

Written for and dedicated to my Wife, Gertrude Louise Miller, upon the occasion of her birthday, April thirtieth, 1918, which day we spent together in Columbus, Ohio.

C. F. H. M.

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THE MATER

All white, she came this afternoon to cheer the
dull, bed-ridden hours
And cool the humid, sultry day.
All white she was, but whitest of all her hair.

A brave woman, of such pluck to bear her undue
share of trial as in another I have never seen,
And, withal, so tireless in her generous zeal by
thought and deed to succour the world's un-
fortunates.

God loving, not God fearing she, her living shaped
by choice and bright ideals,
Part of the soul, not of the mind alone.
All this despite a body wearied and care worn by
years of trial recurrent.

A wonderful woman! Having, herself, a genius
for doing all things excellently well,
She yet has patience infinite for others' blunder-
ings, or worse.

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All this is she and more, my Mother; and so it seems to me
This whiteness 'round about her is most natural, her attribute.

No need to hark for loveliness and charm to younger days gone by,
I thought, while looking on the dear, sweet face;
For there are lines about the eyes and mouth
As beautiful as any silken smoothness,
Lines of a sweetness by care intensified, not dimmed.

U. S. Army Base Hospital, Camp Greene, Charlotte, N. C., July 22, 1918.

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TO GERTRUDE

Dear girl! there's that about you and your loveliness
Which mocks the pen's poor powers.
What use to tell of hair, or eyes, or mouth, or form,
Less charming only than the Soul whose outward appanage they are?

This much only will I say:
A bonnie girl you are, my dear,
And bonnier growing to my eyes each day;
A Song forever in my heart.

Small wonder, then, that I am what
I proudly here confess myself to be—
Not for to-day alone, nor to-morrow,
Nor a year or two . . . for life!—
That passing strange phenomenon,
A man quite hopelessly in love
With some sweet girl . . . his wife.

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TO ADAIR

Floating in a sky of perfect azure,
Ethereally translucent to the bright sun's rays,
A cloud, a veritable Golden Fleece! . . . and
stillness.

A sudden breath of God-sent wind,
And, in the blueness swimming free, a tiny cloud-
let separates;
Glowing in the same sun's beams,
The same fair form in miniature.

Adair! 'twas thus you came;
An added thing of grace and light
To deck the golden, blue high-noon—
The High-noon of my happiness.

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A BIT OF PAINTED CARDBOARD

LIKE books and music, pictures are valuable to any one only in proportion to how much they mean to him. What we get out of each is almost wholly dependent upon what we are able to put into them. An infinity of trains of thought may be suggested, but not everyone will discover the suggestion; many will in all probability find little or nothing beyond a certain arrangement of words, of sound, or of colour. This may or may not be due to lack of taste, there are other elements entering into the case such as: degree of familiarity and sympathy with the theme, inability to understand the author's purpose, accidental state of mind, and other causes leading to misunderstanding. It may well be, therefore, that this little picture which hangs to the left of my mantle-piece would appear to you rather commonplace and uninteresting. To me it is neither, however, because I have associations connected with its subject, am familiar with the scene which it depicts, and appreciate the truth with which it is reproduced.

A small painting in what is known as 'wash,' oblong in form and enclosed by a plain black frame, it is the essence of modesty. For all that,

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it is a very pretty little picture—you would grant this much I am sure, however little you might consider it worthy of the notice here bestowed upon it.

But let me describe it for you, briefly. It represents sunset in the Highlands of Scotland. You are looking along an unenclosed road, which narrows with distance as it stretches away to the crest of a low ridge, and there vanishes; a high, rounded hill flanked by lower ones lies beyond, closing the prospect with a sharp, undulating line. Low round-towers crown the highest and one of the lesser hills. The horizon line is distinct, meeting firmly with the crimson band of sky which, streaked here and there with greyish, slightly luminous sunset clouds, shades first into a red, then to an orange, from this to a yellow, and finally into a faintly greenish expanse. At the base of the bluish hills rises the soft grey mist which always appears on these moors when the sun goes down. In the foreground, on either side of the rutted road which lies and tends slightly to the right of the picture, stretches the heath, royal purple with the blossoming heather. The heather, the haze, the glowing sky—all seem done with a fairy brush; a brush which paints not a picture, but reality.

Another, unfamiliar with the scene, would fail entirely to appreciate this truth and charm of

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portrayal, to him it would be merely a picture like any other—and a very small one too. To me, however, this is no common picture, no ordinary bit of bedaubed cardboard; it is an oblong opening in my wall, through which I look upon the Scottish moors far away. That road, those hills, and that sky are no mere phantoms; that road I have trodden, I have ranged those hills, and that glorious sky—I have seen it!

When my eye chances to rest upon this little scene it is sunset, and I am wandering along a desolate road in the Highlands. The walls of the room and the rumble and rattle of the outside world fade away; I see only the gold and the purple; the odour of moist heather is about me, and I hear no sound save the rhythmical beat of my footsteps as I walk on toward the fiery curtain in the northwest. The glamour bathes me, I feel its warmth upon my face and in my lungs. When the last flush has fled, to leave me under the cold sheen of the stars —time enough then to face about and retrace my steps; but now, I must on into the glow.

If you journey from Aberdeen up the banks of the Dee and alight at a certain little hamlet composed of an inn and some dozen cottages, you will find just such a road as this. Walk down it in the gloaming and you will never forget it.

It was on a Sunday evening some years ago that

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I travelled this road with a friend. We had spent the day in tramping; our church had been the wind-swept summit of the highest of the neighbouring hills, where Nature—that most inspiring of ministers—preached to us a sermon of no common kind, and our afternoon pipes were smoked as we sauntered across the heath. But there can be no such thing as fatigue when one is breathing the air of the Highlands, and evening found us once more upon our feet. We walked along the deserted road, our blood surging and our cheeks tingling from the cool of a northern evening. On either hand swept a motionless sea of purple; not a fence, hedgerow or wall to break its surface with a hard, disillusioning line. Farther off the hills, standing knee-deep in mist like the herd in an autumn meadow, seemed to mark the utmost boundary of the earth. It was as though we were moving in another and better world; the cities with their noise and dirt and misery—how far away they were, how unreal!

Once, a man met us and, stopping, asked for a match; he passed on, his pipe all aglow, and we were left alone once more in this enchanted land. Off to the right, at the foot of a rocky knoll, the yellow eye of a lonely cottage blinked at us fitfully, the only sign of human life in all this world of gold and purple. We spoke but little; it was not the time for conversation.

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Hazlitt in one of his essays violently abjures all companionship when tramping, and Stevenson endorses this view with almost equal emphasis. The gist of their argument is that one cannot draw close to Nature—commune with her—when harrassed by the pestering conversation of a road comrade. This proposition as it stands is of course unassailable, and yet, myself, I cannot agree with them in renouncing all companionship on this account. There are men and men. Your every day dull fellow would by his prosaicness and lack of appreciation, very naturally set your teeth on edge; you must choose your man well, and upon your choice will depend the truth or falsity of this doctrine of the advisability for solitude in walking. Pleasant as solitary walks are, they are not more agreeable than those taken in the company of a congenial friend, one whose intuition is sufficiently fine to enable him to distinguish between the proper and improper time for conversation. Here is an added pleasure, that of silent accord—unspoken agreement; Nature speaks to him even as she speaks to you, you are insensibly drawn into close sympathy with one another by the bond of your common appreciation, and, each participating in the other's pleasure, the enjoyment of each is twofold. Yes, assuredly, it is better to walk with a 'pal' than alone.

The heather and gorse lay on the hillsides in

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roughly rectangular patches of colour, and I wondered idly if it could have been this effect which first gave to the Highlander the idea for his Tartan. What a land it is, drear and sullen, and yet—how beautiful! No man on earth loves his native soil as the Scotsman loves those misty hills. . . . A breath of wind scurried by, bringing with it the sound of a faraway bagpipe; it lasted but an instant, the puff hurried on and once more it was still as death all about us. How the pipes have screamed, how the claymore has flashed over this gory carpet! Scotland is indeed a land of men; rugged and stout as her sea-girt cliffs, yet tender as her desolate moors, the Scot is a true man of the North. A man of iron yet a man of heart, fiercely masculine to his very core—yet in all his being a poet. Right proud and right true, then, is the legend which Caledonia bears on her shield: *Nemo Me Impune Lacessit.*

Greener and greener grew the sky ahead; the red had turned to pink, the orange had gone, and the dark blue vault of night was fast encroaching upon it all. A chill blast struck us in the face, the first breath of oncoming darkness. We stopped; once more the notes of the pipes came to us faintly across the heath, no longer those of a rollicking march however, it was the wail of a dirge that came to us now. We filled our lungs with that glorious air, laden with the scent of

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heather, before turning about and starting homeward; and far on our way we were pursued through the gloom by the cry of the distant pipes, as they wept for Scotland's dead.

All this comes back to me most vividly when I look on this little sketch; I am transported back to that night years ago, and the sensations and emotions which I experienced then are experienced anew. True, the dream is a brief one; only a few moments and then this everyday world closes around me again—a disheartening anticlimax. But then, after all, the best moments of life are always fleeting, it could not be otherwise, no doubt, and these little journeys brief as they are mean quite as much to me, I know, as long hours passed in the humdrum of regular occupation. Nor are they less real perhaps; we are not necessarily farther from actuality, from general principles, when our thoughts are in the clouds than when they are clamped down to hard facts, so called. The telescope distorts no more than the microscope.

I have spoken of this small picture as a window through which I see the place it portrays. This is the nature, the soul of pictures. Unless through them you look upon the very events, scenes or persons that they depict, they are of no real value to you. Apart from their artistic value pictures have the value of their symbolism, their signifi-

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cance; they themselves are merely images, but there lies or should lie something beyond. A "work of art" (if the art be good) is valuable if only because of its art, but works of this kind are comparatively rare and quite beyond the reach of the many, what I have termed the significant type of picture, however, may be within reach of almost all, and certainly it is more general in its appeal. The logman gets quite as much enjoyment from the magazine-supplement lithograph tacked on his shanty wall as any connoisseur from the Old Master hanging in his gallery.

It is entirely a matter of scope, so whatever yours may be, Dear Reader, hang on your walls only that which you can understand and appreciate, for your pictures are to be your companions—day in and day out. Your room will then no longer be bounded by four solid walls, you will sit, as it were, in an observatory, with windows on every side giving upon another world. No doubt you have noticed how much more spacious a room appears after its blank walls have been hung with pictures; similarly is the mind broadened by them. Pity the man who spends all his indoor life surrounded by bare walls—a room devoid of pictures or books is a cell, imprisoning mind as well as body.

There are other pictures in my room whereby I am conjured into other times and places, but, just

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now, my eyes see only the oblong black frame with its bit of painted cardboard . . . I must lay down my pen, for the sky is beginning to fade, and from afar I hear the pipes calling me out on the moor.

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JIMMY BLAKE

A WHINING wind was tapping at the window beside Jimmy's desk; it thrust its icy fingers through the chinks and laid their clammy tips on the back of his neck until the little man, trying desperately to escape, pulled his stool farther back in the room. It was a little better now; the cold fingers still glided about his head, though, and Jimmy could not seem to stop shivering for all that they were not quite so clammy as before.

Day after day he had sat there on his rickety, long-legged stool, making up the work for the rolling-mill, while outside the dingy little office the engines shrieked as they ran past with their truckloads of ingots, and the mills and shops roared forth a constant, monotonous chorus—even as they were doing now. He had sat bent over his grimy high desk for so many days and years that his work had become mere mechanical repetition; as for any interest in it—poor old Jimmy Blake had lost long since the little he had once had. And so, whenever he had made up all the work which was in sight, and there was nothing more to be done until the next batch came in, Jimmy would cross his arms on the desk before him and

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lay his weazened little face on the back of his hands, . . . and in a very few moments the smoke and noise were forgotten, and Jimmy would dream of brooks and fields—and the might-have-been.

For there were might-have-beens in Jimmy's life, that was the worst of it; he had had opportunities years before, but had never made good. They had tried him at the Main Office, and once even sent him travelling for the firm; upon the latter occasion he had returned after three days, with only a very small part of his money gone and with one order for some half-dozen small hull plates. Then he had gone away once and tried his hand at a number of things, but always with the same result; and so, after seven months, nobody was greatly surprised when he reappeared and applied for his old job. He got it; they took him back more out of charity than for any other reason. No, Jimmy was not a success; he had muffed such few opportunities as he had had, and would have done the same with a dozen more, no doubt, if they had presented themselves.

His failures had been too unspeakably lamentable, and for many years now he had felt himself to be a fixture at his desk; he knew that there was nothing ahead of him but to sit there and do the same thing over and over for the rest of his life. Even this he did but indifferently well, his

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mind was always wandering and he had too little confidence in himself. The trouble with Jimmy was that he was too timid—he was afraid to take a chance. His appeals for assistance to the other clerks in the room were never ending; yet he had been there, always at the same work, longer than any of them. It was really not surprising, then, that they should grow weary of these constant interruptions; it seemed that Jimmy was never sure of himself; even when right he liked to have some one look over his work before he let it go from him. And his mistakes! At times his mill would be hopelessly at sea, the work as listed by Jimmy in maddening confusion . . . and then he would hear from them about it!

So Jimmy was a joke at the office—that was the long and the short of it—to be laughed at always, and not infrequently cursed at. The others had their work to do and did it; poor old Jimmy doddered about, racked his little grey head, annoyed everyone, was jeered at by all—and finally got his done, after a fashion. Although nobody took him at all seriously, they all felt that they must put up with him; not one of them would have had the heart to throw him out—what would ever become of the poor old devil if they did? No, he was a fixture, and they knew it; so they growled and cursed, and Jimmy sat rabbit-like on his stool. He had grown more or less used to being their

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butt, and always took their gibes in the same frightened, scolded-dog way; but there were times when it hurt nevertheless. If they knew this, they did not seem to care—Jimmy ought to be thankful that they put up with him at all.

"By G—, Jimmy's gettin' worse every day—asleep all the time now. Come on; wake up, you old swab!"—Splicer stuck his pen into Jimmy's elbow—the bowed head bobbed up with a jerk and Jimmy looked across at his disturber with enquiring, watery eyes. When he had recovered from his uproarious laughter, Splicer continued: "What the devil do you do at night, Jim—eh? Ye seem to take yer sleep in the daytime. Out raisin' hell, I suppose!" The entire staff roared its approval at this bit of wit.

"Dear me, was I asleep?" Jimmy ran his crooked fingers through his sparse grey hair, then climbed down from his stool, picked up his pen which had rolled to the floor, and bending over the desk took up his work again.

It was true, Jimmy's naps had grown more frequent of late. He tried to keep awake—tried his best, but it seemed as though he could not help falling asleep. A drowsiness so strong that to resist it occasioned actual suffering would creep over him; his head felt like lead, he could not think—and then all at once everything became black. When he had to go over to the mill and stand

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about in the icy draughts the cold sank through to his very bones; for some time now he had had a bad cough which grew worse from day to day, and a peculiar tightness about the chest increased with it. Then that weak heart of his was jumping and causing him to miss his breath oftener than of old—Jimmy was feeling worse these days than ever he had before.

But he was game, and every day he tottered down to the smoke-ridden steel plant and worked and dozed until the whistle blew at six o'clock, when he tottered back to his cheerless lodging house, ate his never-changing supper and sat alone in his bare little room, reading by the flickering gas light until it was time to go to bed. And what do you suppose Jimmy read?

Once, many years ago, when on a Saturday's visit to the city, he had picked up three or four old volumes outside a second-hand book shop; the titles were good and he had been started along a path of real reading. His little library now numbered an hundred-odd volumes, and Jimmy read Scott and Dickens and that sort of thing; he even got so far as Longfellow and Tennyson. When primed for his greatest, most serious flights, he would dig into his Shakespeare and his Bible. Of all his treasured books though, Jimmy valued most an old, battered translation of *Les Misérables,* and he blessed the chance which had led

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him to buy the set; when he bought it he had no idea beyond getting a great deal of reading matter for a small outlay—the books looked so fat and inviting. But your nearest and dearest mean no more to you than Jean Valjean came to mean to Jimmy.

So Jimmy's evenings were passed in another world. He took his reading seriously; when he read he viewed the play from the gallery, not from the pit—the type spelled reality to him. It was this world of his books which formed the background of his dreams during the day, and he looked forward to his evenings as the prisoner does to his hour in the prison-yard.

When the whistle blew, some two hours after his rude awakening by Splicer, Jimmy hurried across the plant, and a moment later he was being swept out through the gateway by the dark, surging stream of blackened humanity which poured into the street outside amid the clattering of dinner-pails and a dull hum of many voices exchanging gruff jests and comment. That night Jimmy's whimsical fancy made of the straggling, pushing mob an orderly column; the rattle of the dinner-pails became the clanking of accoutrements, the babel of voices—hoarse calls of command, and all the way down the street until he came to the corner and rounded it, leaving the main body of workmen to go on in another direction, the little

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man walked with his head thrown back and his shoulders squared—for he was marching to battle . . . Jimmy Blake, Sir, of the Old Guard!

Once he had turned the corner, however, and was plodding up the muddy street alone, his dream faded—the pains in the chest returned, and he was just the old insignificant Jimmy, trudging miserably homeward through the slush and the drizzle. As he was passing the garishly lighted doors of the "Opera House" he glanced at the gaudy bill-boards, decorated with their customary groups of smirking women in the variegated tights of the burlesque world. Jimmy shook his head sadly at the string of men lined up before the box-office, among whom he recognized two of the clerks from "the staff." How could they spend their free hours in going to see that sort of thing, he wondered, when there were so many books in the world! And he quickened his step so as to get the sooner to his little room.

A particularly bad twinge of pain in his chest sent him into the pharmacy at the corner of his street. He emerged a moment later with a bottle of Expectorant in his hand, and stumbled on down the ill-lighted side street, splashing his way through puddles and muck, to the door of his lodging house—number 543. What a dirty, smelly little hole it was! Jimmy realized the fact

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with renewed intensity that night, and a wave of self-pity swept over him. There was a large lump in his throat as he climbed the uneven steps, steadying himself by the shaky baluster. When he pushed open the door of his room and walked in he found it so cold that what with his trembling hand and chattering teeth he could scarcely light the gas. After washing at the iron wash-stand in the corner and brushing his hair in front of the clouded mirror which hung above it, he went down-stairs for his supper, leaving the gas-jet turned partway on, so as to warm up the room a little.

His supper made him feel somewhat better; the cup of hot, if bitter, coffee especialy seemed to bring a comforting warmth to his marrow. But when he returned to his room he found the gas turned down to a pin's point; it felt very chilly there compared with the down-stairs part of the house. The landlady, Mrs. Boggs, was an extremely economical person (she had to be, she said, "So's to make both ends meet at all") and she seemed to find that the best place in which to economize was that part of the house given up to the lodgers—which was no more than human nature, to be sure, when you come to think of it.

Jimmy took a swallow of the Expectorant, and then got a book down from the rude board shelves above the table. His martial phantasy on

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the way back from work had suggested something military for the evening's reading, so he chose one of the volumes of *Les Misérables,* and wrapping himself in a blanket from the bed, he sat down under the flickering gas-jet and turned to that wonderful description of the Battle of Waterloo.

But he could not read, his heart and the pain in his chest would not allow him to. He was shivering badly again and the type danced before his eyes, making his head swim. Laying the book aside, he drew the blanket closer about him and leaned back in the chair. For a time he studied the impossible pink flowers on the blotched and faded yellow wall-paper, and then his eyes wandered to his only picture, which hung over the bedstead; it was a glaring lithograph representing Washington crossing the Delaware. Jimmy laughed an uneasy laugh when he found that looking at the bright blue cakes of ice made him shiver worse than ever. He picked up the book and tried again to read—it was no use, he simply could not do it. So he fell on his knees and prayed God that he might get better, that his reading —all that there was in life for him—might not be taken from him. Then he undressed and lay down in his bed, and although his head felt very hot and he breathed with difficulty, in time he fell asleep.

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He was at his desk as usual the next morning, but he had hardly been able to get there, he felt so badly. It was raining a dreary rain, outside in the smoke, and the work piled up on the desk in front of him was unusually heavy. "If only I could get away from it all," Jimmy thought, and he could hardly keep down a sob, "if only I could just sit and read 'till I died!" The hard lump was in his throat again, and the rims of his eyes were hot as he looked out through the sooty window at the monstrous blast furnace with its clustering brood of stoves, the same ugly black furnace at which he had looked for so many years. He pulled himself together with an effort, and went at his work. But he could not seem to make any headway. . . . The morning passed and afternoon came.

"Oh, damn it all, Jimmy; come on, you've got to get that done, you know. It's all very well your slackin' around here when there ain't much to do, but that work's got to go to the mill before five; so speed up, will you?" The "chief" was in earnest, and Jimmy struggled hopelessly on. Every minute he felt worse—an overpowering dizziness and lassitude was gradually taking possession of him. At last, about four o'clock, it grew so bad that the little man could stand it no longer—he took his swimming head in his hands,

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and then all at once that blackness swallowed him and he fell forward on the desk.

It was some ten minutes later that Splicer, whose seat was directly opposite, looked up. There was Jimmy in his characteristic pose, and before him lay a good sized pile of work which must go to the mill at five o'clock, in time to make up the heats for the night shift.

"Wake up, oh—wake *up!*" he shouted, "asleep at the switch again, you confounded old loafer—come on now, get at that—ye haven't got all night ye know!" The bowed figure showed no sign of life, so Splicer leaned across the desk and poured half the contents of his ink-well over Jimmy's head, to the huge delight of "the staff." Still he made no move. When a hard crack on the knuckles with his ruler failed to arouse him, an uneasy look came into Splicer's face; he walked around the desk, lifted Jimmy's ink-bespattered head and turned his shrivelled face to the light. The great, black blast furnace was still there, outside in the rain, but although his eyes looked straight at it through the grimy window pane, Jimmy did not see it—not this time.

They have a bright young fellow in the office now; a worker, the sort of a lad you can't keep down. There is no sleeping done at Jimmy's place, Splicer does not need to prod across the desk. Office routine runs smoothly and the work

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is done promptly and well, for "the staff" is no longer disturbed by interruptions from Jimmy's stool.

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A CASE IN POINT

IT IS NOT often that four men, made travelling companions by the merest chance, will form a really congenial group, a group in which each finds the other three interesting and entertaining; and yet we four aboard the Iceland packet made up just such a little band. Perhaps I am flattering myself when I give you the impression that I interested the Doctor, Herr Kneipe, and the "globe-trotting" Baltimorean. Frankly, I think that I was more interested in each of them than any one of them was in me, nevertheless, I must say that I held my own sufficiently well to avoid being considered an intruder.

We were cosmopolitan. The Doctor was a Scot; he had studied his Medicine at St. Andrews, and while there—unlike many of his professional brothers—he had thought some other branches of knowledge worthy of his consideration; by which I mean to imply that he was a doctor of the old school, the broad school, he was a man of parts. Herr Kneipe, who had come over from Copenhagen on the boat, was an instructor of Psychology in the University there; obviously then, a man of training and intellect. Fraser, as

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I have mentioned, came from Baltimore, Maryland, and was by profession a seeker of new lands; he possessed a wealth of anecdote and his comment invariably showed the judicial poise to be expected from a man of his experience and early training in the Law. As for me, the most humble of the party, to be sure, I am by way of being a journalist, a member of the staff on one of the London daily papers. In journeying to Iceland we none of us had any object beyond rest and recreation and, in consequence, we were all unusually genially inclined from the first. My being made a party to their smoking-saloon deliberations may have been due to this geniality of atmosphere, I am sure that it was to a considerable extent, but I seemed to fit in fairly well too, largely, I take it, because I have read a little, have seen a little more perhaps, and am interested in almost any subject that comes along, whether it be railway spikes or Old English roots.

The bond which had first drawn us together from among the dozen or so of men making up the ship's passenger-list and which kept us united throughout the passage from Leith to Reykjávik was a rather philosophical attitude toward things in general, an attitude common to all four of us. If you ask me if we were philosophers, I can only answer as did Mr. Pickwick when the same question was put to him by Jingle: we were "Observ-

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ers of human nature, Sir." Before we had put a day's run into our wake we had, by a process of natural selection, found one another out, and thereafter we were almost constantly together. We had our particular table in the smoke-room, where we would sit by the hour, and on the decks we formed a little Peripatetic School of our own.

"That's a broad subject—fatalism," observed Kneipe as he deliberately knocked the ashes from his uncouth Danish pipe, and then he added slowly and with due scholarly caution:—"It would seem, though, that the doctrine may well be accepted, . . . with certain limitations."

"To what sort of limitations do you refer, sir?" enquired the Doctor.

We were seated in our accustomed corner of the smoking-saloon, after dinner, on the evening of our third day out. Foreseeing a discussion, possibly protracted and, judging by the subject matter, almost certain to prove worthy of uninterrupted attention, I seized this opportunity to call to the steward to take away the coffee cups and bring in the glasses and beer. When this had been done and we were once more left to ourselves, the Professor, who had sat in deep meditation the while, cleared his throat and answered the Doctor's question.

"It is not a perfectly easy matter to answer such a question in a few words—I am sure that

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you understand that, my dear Doctor; but, roughly, this is what I mean: Fatalism proper, the fatalism of the Oriental and, in a sense, of the old-school Calvinist too—your pardon, sir!—implies that the individual is really nothing more than a puppet. The gods have laid down the course, and man can only follow his destiny blindly and passively—he is not a free agent, and *Che sarà sarà*. This is the doctrine as it stands. Personally I cannot accept it in this form—Western civilization in general does not. To do so is to dry up the very well spring of our Occidental conception of Life and its meaning. However—and this is the limitation of the philosophy to which I referred a moment ago—we do very generally accept it in a modified form; with us it is not so much an individual as it is a racial, a world-fatalism. In short, we believe in Evolution." The Professor leaned back in his corner and eyed us expectantly, one after the other, through his steel rimmed spectacles.

"I see your point," the Doctor said after a moment's reflection,

'There is a Divinity that shapes our ends
Rough hew them as we may.'

"— but doesn't it go a little farther than that, isn't there something beyond this general law of

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cause and effect? What I am getting at is this: are there not combinations of *circumstance* which so to speak tie a man's hands, and lead him unavoidably to a particular action or condition? Combinations of circumstance which do not bear any direct relation to anything going before, and therefore not to be considered as evolutionary. If such conditions do arise, and I am sure that you will all agree that they do, unless you call them simply accidental, a mere matter of luck, you must attribute them to the inevitable—to Fate. Am I right? . . . No; I am inclined to believe that there is such a thing as fatality, and that it reaches us in our lives as individuals."

"Isn't it Taine," said I, "who says that a man is the resultant of three things—his race, his surroundings and the spirit of the times in which he lives. Of course that is the 'fatalism of evolution' to which Herr Kneipe referred; even that doesn't seem to leave a man much leeway, does it? But as I understand it, Doctor, you are alluding to something other than this again, a foreordination of events, quite separate from the make-up of the man himself. Is that the idea?"

"That is it exactly, sir."

"Excuse me for putting in my oar," Fraser said as he turned toward me, "it's not a vital point at all and in no way affects the broader application of the principle, but I think, Mr. Hall, that Taine

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offered that doctrine as a working basis for literary criticism. His idea was, as I recall it, that an author's *work* reflected these influences, and that they should be taken into consideration in judging of it. Pardon me for taking you up."

"Of course—I had forgotten that he limited it in that way; but after all, as you say, what would be true of his writing would be true of the man himself." No one seemed inclined to dispute this, so I concluded that my remark had not been badly scotched after all.

Fraser spoke again:

"There's a great deal of truth in that view of course, beyond a doubt there is, but I can't help feeling that something underlies all that in a man—there is something deeper. Every man, I think, possesses a quality, indefinable and unrelated to everything external, not to be accounted for by heredity, a quality which distinguishes him from all others—I mean personality. Of course I know some hold that personality itself is merely the result of moulding causes, but I do not. It lies deeper than that; in a way we may call it the *ego*, the manifestation of the individual soul."

Herr Kneipe was beaming,—"Aha, now you have it!" he exclaimed delightedly. "Yes, yes—there is something underlying all outward manifestations. Things in general, everything possesses a substance, an actuality, which cannot be

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defined. This personality which you, Sir, have so well put before us does exist in Man, and through it he achieves a freedom which enables him to over-ride predisposition and environment. I have seen many such cases; I have met with them in my work."

The Doctor sat twirling the ash-tray in his hand:

"From what you have just said regarding Substance, Professor, I infer that you are by way of being a transcendentalist,"—he said with a smile.

"I am, Sir—"Kneipe returned, overlapping the Doctor's last word in his eagerness, "that is my School . . . a thing is not the sum of its attributes—it is more!"

"I am inclined to agree with the Professor and Mr. Fraser," I volunteered, "I believe in this 'personality' or 'individuality.' Doubtless it is known beforehand what our life is to be, but we are fundamentally free agents—we have the shaping of it at the time. We are free to choose, I mean, and it hardly seems reasonable to lay all the responsibility for the result of free choice upon heredity, environment and that sort of thing. That's a dingy philosophy, that heredity-environment business; and you give us a dingier one still, Doctor, with your 'inevitable circumstance' idea added on. A man pretty well makes the bed he lies in, I think!"

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The Doctor eyed me quizzically, "I seem to have the three of you about my ears," he laughed as he reached for his glass. Then,

"Let me tell you a little story," he continued more seriously, "it is not altogether a pleasant story, but I think it bears on the subject under discussion. I used to feel very much as you do about this matter; that is to say I believed—as Mr. Hall has just put it, and very aptly too—that a man pretty well made the bed he had to lie in, and I might still but for my connection with this incident.

"Whenever we read or hear indirectly of a case in which a man is apparently the victim of Fortune the tendency is always, I think, to look upon him with compassion mingled with a slight feeling of annoyance at his blindness—for so it appears to us who can stand off and view the matter from outside. Isn't this so? . . . Take Othello, for instance: we feel keenly for the man, we recognize his nobility of character, and as the tragedy draws toward its close we are appalled at the pity of it all. And yet, at the same time, we grow almost exasperated with the man—'Why is he so stupid?' we ask; time and time again a situation presents itself in which a word from him would clear away the whole mesh of deception, but he flounders deeper and deeper into the trap, and when at last he does speak it is too late—the

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strands have been pulled too tight. The author has masterfully sought to give an effect of inevitability to it all, but I think there is always a feeling on the part of the spectator that in real life the thing could not occur. The man would surely do something to break the bonds before they had become too close; we think that there is something artificial about it—and we console ourselves with the thought that *we* at all events would not act so blindly under like circumstances, Do you get my point, am I right? . . . Well, then, this 'if' which always appears very plain when we see someone else hemmed in by circumstances—if he had only done this or that, if he had not been so hasty, and so forth—we are sure that we ourselves should have profited by it. We see his slips very clearly, we who are at a distance; but if we were ourselves in the thick of it, would we be so free as we think? From the outside it is easy to formulate these 'ifs,' it is only when you yourself are implicated in the matter that you come to believe that the outcome was inevitable. It may be that if I were to learn the circumstances which I am about to relate as you will— in a disinterested way that is—the affair might appear to me in a different light. But I was involved in the thing and know exactly how it came about, and I tell you that I firmly believe that this boy, with the mentality—the personality if you like, Mr.

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Fraser—that was his (he had all the impulsiveness, the strongly emotional nature of his race), could not have acted in any other way than he did. And so, in this instance at least, I must believe in fatalism; for with his character on one hand and a particular combination of circumstance on the other, I cannot see how he could be considered a free agent, and whether you believe this combination of circumstance to have been Destiny or merely the result of accident, to my mind, in no way affects this conclusion; in either case he was not free. But I will give you the story and leave you to form your own opinion."

We settled ourselves more comfortably in our chairs. The Professor and I gave our pipes a fresh load and Fraser bit the end off a cigar. The Doctor lay back in his corner the while, pensively pulling his beard. Just as he was commencing to speak once more we were startled by a long blast of the ship's siren. Stepping out on deck I found that we had run into a thick fog. As soon as I had returned to my seat and told them of the change in the weather the Doctor began his story, and as he was telling it, at regular intervals, the melancholy hoot of the fog-whistle came rumbling in from outside.

"There is a little mountain lake in the Carpathians which is a real gem for beauty. I doubt if even you, Mr. Fraser—traveller that you are

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—have ever so much as heard of it. It is not famous; its charm is not of the startling kind, and I should never have heard of it myself had it not been described to me once by an Hungarian friend as just the place to go to when you were worn out and wished to get completely away from the world, in order to rest body and mind through the peaceful contemplation of a scene of perfect loveliness unadorned. I remembered this friend's enthusiastic advice, and so it happened that several years later—and this is about five summers ago now—when I was badly in need of a few weeks of absolute quiet, I journeyed out to Transylvania, looked the place up and settled down in the delightful little inn at the foot of the lake.

"There were not many stopping at the inn; such visitors as there were—nearly all Hungarians and Rumanians—stayed but a few days and then moved on, doubtless in search of some place where their vivacious natures might be better served by a little more activity. As for me, I watched them come and go with indifference. That little sheet of water with its wooded banks was something to dream about; my friend had given it no more than its due, and every day that I rowed about on its waters or strolled around its rocky margin carried deeper within me the repose which I sought. I recall several writers—your Thoreau among others, Mr. Fraser,—who have

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spoken of the lake as Nature's master-work, and I am not at all sure that they are not right.

"I had been there for a week or ten days, I suppose, when a boy and girl arrived—honeymooning. They were as charming a pair as I have ever seen, good to look upon and in every way delightful as only, I think, an Irish bridal couple can be. They were both from Dublin; the lad was connected with our embassy in Vienna, and someone there having told him of this out-of-the-way nook, he had taken his bride of a fortnight back to the Continent in time to give them ten days there before they would have to return to his post—and the World. I am not of a very sentimental sort, I think, but in the few hours when I had this boy and girl to look at and occasionally to exchange a word with, they came to mean quite as much to me as the glittering lake and the nodding trees. As I stood on the terrace in front of the hotel, upon the morning after their arrival, watching the play of sunlight on the ruffled water and the drifting clouds overhead, I thought that nothing could be more beautiful, but the sound of a woman's laugh caused me to turn my head; they were walking together—the boy and the girl—across the grass toward the lake-side, and as I looked at them the world grew brighter and lovelier still."

The Doctor paused, interrupted by a blast of

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the siren—louder and more dismally long than usual. There was something uncanny about the rise and fall of its raucous voice. He took a sip from his glass and resumed:

"I must not go on in this vein or you will be calling me a sentimental old fool for all my protestation to the contrary, but to tell the truth they went right 'to the heart of me' as they would be saying in their native land. Their youth, their beauty and their light-heartedness—it was all very winning; at least it won me, crusty old bachelor that I am! And it was the way they loved too—not a vestige of mawkishness about it, you know . . . nothing of your German honeymoon style; but you could see it in their eyes and hear it in their voices. They adored one another's shadows!

"One evening I was seated down by the lakeside, watching the sunset lights on sky and water. They stood and chatted with me for a moment and then wandered on to the little pier where the rowboats were moored. The golden mirror of the lake was shattered as their boat drew away from the shore, but I bore them no ill-will for that —to my mind their little craft with its dark figure at the oars and white form at the tiller-ropes merely completed the picture—enhanced it. The boy called out to me and the girl waved a ravishing white arm; I shouted and waved back, then

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sat and watched them. Upon my word—I think I was almost as happy as they were!

"As I looked out across the water I noticed a little patch of ripples scudding after them, and I felt on my cheek the breath of a faint sun-set breeze. I experienced an unaccountable interest in that flying patch of ruffled surface and followed it with my eye as it silently and swiftly bore down upon them—I say unaccountable because it was but the dying breath of a breeze such as could scarcely have endangered a boy's cockle boat. In an instant it had overtaken them. Just as the first ripples were lapping their rudder, a light, filmy scarf which the girl had worn carelessly tossed over her shoulders was lifted from them and blown off into the water at her side. With a little cry of dismay she half arose from the seat and leaning out reached for it—in a flash they were over. For a moment I sat stupefied. I could scarcely realize what had happened, it had come so quickly; but recovering my senses, I started on the run for the boat-landing. All the while I kept my eyes fixed on the spot where the boat floated, filled—with only an inch or two of the gunwale showing; the spot fascinated me and I could not look away for more than an instant at a time—just long enough to let me see where I was going. For a moment (an age it seemed to me) there was nothing to be seen but the black rim of the

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boat and the white ring of foamy water where they had gone under, then the boy's head appeared, and as he shook the water from his eyes and looked wildly about him there came a gleam of white a few feet away. He struck out, grasping it just as it was disappearing again; and then I saw the girl pinion him madly in her frantic struggles. He tried to disengage himself, but she had her arms wrapped around his neck and they both went under together. Sick at heart I ran on toward the landing—I was almost there now. They reappeared with him holding her at arm's length; but her blind struggles continued, she got one arm over his shoulder, and then—I saw him strike her again and again in the face with his fist. I heard her shriek. The blood froze in my veins; Good God, could it be possible! I had reached the landing by this time and stood there transfixed with horror, gazing at that fiend of a man there in the water. Had he stopped at last? Yes, and she lay still in his arm with her head fallen inert on his shoulder. He saw me and called to me faintly, hoarsely; I started from my lethargy, and suddenly it dawned upon me that he was no fiend after all, but had merely kept a cool head and had done the only thing that could be done to save her. I leaped into a boat and pulled at the oars with every ounce that was in me, I have never rowed on the Thames as I rowed then.

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When I reached them I found him clinging to the gunwale of the submerged boat with one hand, while with the other he was endeavouring to keep the girl's chin above water. But he was almost done.

"With some difficulty I got the lifeless body of the girl over the stern, and then pulled the boy over after her. As I looked on that chalk-white face all bruised and bleeding, and thought of how bonnie it had been when she passed by me but a moment before, I was seized by a fit of angry indignation, though I realized full well that the lad only did the right thing.

"Some of the hotel people had seen what had occurred and were awaiting us at the landing. They carried the girl to the house, while I followed behind, steadying the tottering boy. There was nothing the matter with him beyond complete exhaustion, so I sent him to his bed and told him to stay there, promising to come for him and take him to his wife as soon as I should have restored her to consciousness. We carried the girl to a room nearby, and I set to work; I got a little water out of her lungs, but it was evident that she was suffering more from her stunning and shock than from partial drowning.

"I had worked over her for about an hour and a half when she opened her eyes—but they were delirious eyes, and a moment later she began to

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struggle and rave. The proprietor of the hotel was assisting me, and we held her without great difficulty—she was just a slip of a girl. But her wild cries were heart-rending—she thought we were killing her and screamed madly for help: Jack had tried to kill her too . . . he had struck her . . . everybody wanted to kill her . . . yes, everybody . . . but why? She wailed again and again 'Why?' . . . what had she done? Her cries were agonizing; tears stood in the landlord's eyes merely to see and hear her, he could not understand a word that she uttered. At times she would rave incoherently, but always she would return to her terrified query: why were we, why was Jack trying to kill her?

"She had continued to scream and struggle faintly for hours in spite of all my efforts to quiet her and I was beginning at last to become alarmed by the undue duration of her delirium and the increasing gravity of the character of her hallucinations when, in the midst of an unusually severe attack, I heard the door open and close. I was too busily engaged to look around for a moment or two, when I did, to my horror I saw the boy standing in the room, his face as white as death. I sprang to my feet and went toward him, begging him to go at once, scolding him for coming against my orders and reassuring him—all in a breath.

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It was but a temporary thing, I told him, quite natural under the circumstances, and would surely pass off in a short while. But my face must have belied me, he must have seen the fear in my eyes. His lip quivered slightly: 'You are lying to me, Doctor,' he half whispered, 'I have been in there on my bed for hours listening to her cries 'till I couldn't stand it any longer—for hours I tell you. No, it won't pass off . . . Oh my God, she's mad . . . mad!' Before I could prevent it he had slipped around me to the bedside.

"Gentlemen, my heart has been torn more than once; a medical man, I think, lives in a world of particularly poignant grief and scarcely a day passes but he witnesses sorrows too deep for tears, but I assure you that never in my life—before or since—have I felt greater pain than I did in the moment that followed. As he leaned over the bed and spoke to her, calling her by name, she shrank from him; then, screaming like a fury, she flew at his head, beating and tearing his face with her hands, fighting him back until she fell to the floor by the bed-side, where she lay writhing and screaming that he had come to kill her . . . he had tried to before and would do it this time. . . . 'Oh, take him away—keep him from me,' she moaned. I sprang for her and lifted her to the bed; she lay there

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sobbing. I turned toward the boy—I cannot describe the look of grisly horror on his bleeding face—I do not like to think of it.

" 'She believes that I tried to kill her, that I fought her off—Good God! you know that I did it to save her—you do, don't you?'

" 'Of course I do,' I said to him, taking him by the arm and leading him to the door, 'and so will she if you will only give her a chance to recover from her shock. You must go at once, go to your room and stay there until I come to you with the good news,' I held the door open for him.

" 'Good news? So it's good news that's to be coming to me is it?' and he laughed. The hard note in his mocking laugh and the set expression of his face disquieted me, so I kept my eyes on him until I saw him enter his room and close the door.

"The girl had exhausted such strength as remained to her in this last paroxysm and lay panting and trembling, still crying out from time to time—but ever more feebly, until at last she ceased altogether and lay quiet but for an occasional low groan. After a time even this stopped, and she slept.

"Our poor landlord, who ever since the disastrous arrival of the husband had sat dazed and terrified only half understanding what had trans-

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pired, looked by this time almost ready to drop, and as I anticipated no further need for his assistance I told him that all would now be well and that he might go and get a little sleep while I remained and watched. He did not want to go at first but I induced him to do so at last. Poor fellow, he was hard hit by what we had been through; he was under the impression that she had not recognized her husband, and I did not see fit at the moment to tell him otherwise. 'Poor girl, poor girl!' he said as he shook his head sadly and turned toward the door. As I sat there alone by the bed-side, watching by the dim light of the oil lamp (turned low since the girl had fallen asleep), I felt hope rise higher and higher within me; for her respiration and pulse grew quiet and even, and a look of peace had gradually crept over the sleeping face; livid and bruised as it was, in it I could recognize once again the blythe little lady I had known before. Fatigue at last got the better of me, and sometime in the early morning I too fell asleep.

When I awakened, the sun was shining in at the window and the birds were singing in the trees. I leaned over the bed and looked at the sleeping girl. She stirred under my gaze, then the eyelids quivered and opened, her blue eyes looked up into mine, questioningly for an instant, and then she smiled. And I thanked God in my heart, for it was the old smile—her smile.

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"I left the room without speaking and walked down the hall to fetch the boy. She was his once more, and I well knew that the sight of him would do more for her now than all the doctoring in the world. I trod on air as I went, so eager was I to break the good news to the poor laddie. Without stopping to knock I pushed open the unlocked door and stepped inside—the room was empty.

"We found him a short time after, down among the trees by the lake-side—shot through the mouth. He had been dead for hours. The girl has always believed that he was drowned—I was able to manage matters so that she should: she remembered nothing after going down the first time, and thought that he gave his life in saving her. Isn't it better so?

"We buried him there, among the trees by the lake; and on the little granite headstone, below his name, she painted in black letters: *He Died for Me.* And true enough; he did."

As we opened the door and stepped out into the night we were met by the mournful voice of the fog-horn, and the mist felt bitterly cold. I stopped a moment outside the companion-way; the sound of the ship's bell came aft to me—and then the plaintive cry of the lookout: "Eight . . . bells . . . and . . . all's . . . well."

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